DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 435 119 EA 030 093

TITLE	Prevention Strategies That Work.
INSTITUTION	Vermont Univ., Burlington.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	21p.; "Written and produced by Warger, Eavy, and Associates."
CONTRACT	H237F0036
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Behavioral Objectives; Educational Administration; *Educational Environment; Elementary Education; Instructional Leadership; *Prevention; Program Descriptions; Student Behavior

ABSTRACT

This guide describes six prevention practices that K-8 administrators have found to accelerate school performance, increase readiness for learning, and reduce problem behaviors. It shows that to create a safe school environment, preventive measures for children's behavior and emotional problems must be in place. It advocates positive behavior management, social- skills instruction, academic enrichment, parent partnerships, and school/community-agency linkages. Although such practices cannot prevent all inappropriate behaviors from occurring, they can help create a school environment that promotes positive behavior. The information in the guide is based on the work of researchers at 6 universities who spent the last 6 years implementing school-based prevention practices. Their focus was on students with--and at risk of developing--emotional and behavioral disorders. Examples of prevention strategies from each of these projects are included throughout the document. Although research-based strategies varied across the districts represented in the guide, one finding remained constant. That is, administrators were key players in making prevention work. They provided an environment that fostered positive behavior and made available specialized support and services that interrupt cycles of negative behavior. Contact information for each project is found at the end of the guide. (Contains 20 references.) (RJM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

EA

ED 435 119

Prevention Strategies That Work

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
P. Kay
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

What Administrators Can Do To Promote Positive Student Behavior

Administrators know only too well that concern for student misbehavior is not new — although the behavior problems have become more prevalent, violent, and destructive during the past 20 years. In poll after poll, behavior problems, lack of discipline, student safety, and violence in the schools, make the top 10 list of concerns about public education. And these concerns are no longer directed only at middle and high schools. Increasingly, serious discipline problems are affecting elementary schools as well.

As many elementary classroom teachers will tell you, they spend an inordinate amount of time and energy managing student misbehavior and conflict — time that could be spent on teaching and learning. A recent survey found that elementary students disrupt the classroom and talk back or disobey teachers more frequently than they did a decade ago (Langdon, 1997).

Until recently, practitioners often waited until the behavior became serious enough to warrant referral to special education or other intensive services. Sadly, the teachers and parents of too many of these students see signs of potential difficulty long before the behavior escalates to the point of referral — in some cases, by the end of first grade (Wehby, Dodge, Valente, and others, 1993). Although many young children today participate in early childhood programs designed to prevent future learning problems (e.g., Head Start, Early Start, preschool), elementary school is a child's first experience with formal schooling. While many children easily adjust to the rules and routines that define the code of conduct in public school classrooms, some students need more support in making this transition.

EA 030 093

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Unfortunately, there has been little support for early intervention when a child shows signs of behavioral difficulties, and in some cases there have been significant barriers. For example, a clause in the 1997 reauthorization of the ***Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*** (IDEA) has inadvertently caused some administrators to refrain from discussing and addressing minor behavioral difficulties while others have begun automatically to refer students for the slightest infraction.

Administrators are wise to be concerned. The number of referrals continues to increase and the need to **prevent** many of these troublesome behaviors has never been so great. Fortunately, prevention strategies do exist that enable school communities to redirect misbehavior and reduce the potential for misbehavior early on, before the need for formal discussion arises.

This guide describes prevention practices that K-8 school administrators have found to be effective in accelerating school performance, increasing readiness for learning, and reducing problem behaviors. Creating a safe school environment requires, among other things, having in place many preventive measures for children's behavioral and emotional problems. While these practices cannot prevent all inappropriate behaviors from occurring — indeed, administrators could implement all of the strategies in this guide and still experience behavioral problems for which they need more intensive strategies — they can help you create a school environment that promotes positive behavior.

The information in this guide derives from the work of researchers at six universities who spent the last six years implementing school-based prevention practices. Their focus was on students with — and at risk of developing — emotional and behavioral disorders. Examples of prevention strategies from each of these projects are included throughout this document. Contact information for each project is found at the end of the document.

Research-based strategies varied across the districts represented in this guide, but one finding remained constant. First and foremost, **administrators are key to making prevention work**. Their role is twofold: providing an environment that fosters positive behavior and making available specialized support and services that can interrupt cycles of negative behavior.

What Do We Know About Prevention?

Effective prevention programs are based on the premise that early response to learning, behavioral, and emotional problems can lead to better outcomes for students. Prevention strategies are built into the school's foundation as part of the regular school program. They are accessible to **all** students — not just those students who qualify for special programs such as special education or Title I.

Two types of universal prevention approaches fit well at the elementary school level. These are:

- **Classroom and schoolwide structural strategies.** Practitioners provide consistent environments in classrooms and throughout the entire school. These approaches are designed to benefit all students by building uniform structure and a positive climate that promotes and supports appropriate behavior. Structural

Components of Promising Prevention Programs

Does your school have the following prevention practices?

Prevention in the Classroom

- ❒ Positive behavior management.
- ❒ Social skills instruction.
- ❒ Academic enrichment.

Schoolwide Prevention

- ❒ Unified discipline approach.
- ❒ Shared expectations for socially competent behavior.
- ❒ Academic enrichment.

School-Family-Community Linkages

- ❒ Parent partnerships.
- ❒ Community services.

approaches, both those found within individual classrooms and those that are implemented schoolwide, typically address prevention from a multidimensional perspective that includes behavioral management, social skills instruction, and academic enrichment.

- **School as a pathway to family and community agency partnerships.** Although classroom and schoolwide structural strategies provide a stable and positive environment for most students, some students need additional support. Sound prevention strategies at this level establish linkages between the primary aspects of students' lives: home and family, school and classroom, and community and social service agencies. Family, school, and community agency partnerships can provide temporary assistance that can preempt the need for more intensive interventions.

Both types of prevention — working in tandem and on a consistent basis — are necessary.

Comprehensive school-based prevention strategies at the elementary level are relatively new. However, in most cases administrators will have some prevention strategies already in place. They can use these structures as building blocks as they work to establish a more comprehensive approach.

Prevention strategies can help administrators answer the following questions:

- What can be done in the classroom?
- What works schoolwide?
- How can we support students through school-family partnerships?
- How can we build community agency linkages?

Following are examples of promising strategies in each of these areas.

Prevention in the Classroom

Administrators know that effective classroom practices — such as good classroom organization, engaging lessons with high rates of student response, positive climates, accommodations to match students' ability levels, and mild consequences for misbehavior — usually will lead to appropriate behaviors for the majority of students. However, many of today's students often require additional support.

Prevention approaches in classrooms focus on what students need to be successful (Dodge & Bickert, 1996). They extend the practitioner's reach in helping students before corrective measures are necessary (Henley, 1997). Prevention has two important advantages over corrective, after-the-fact discipline. First, it tends to be cost effective — it is much easier to prevent inappropriate behaviors than it is to correct them. Second, there are no negative consequences for children who behave appropriately.

In most classroom and schoolwide prevention approaches, there is an emphasis on:

- Behavior management systems that teach and reward appropriate behaviors.
- Social skills instruction as an integral part of the curriculum.
- Academic enrichment to ensure that students master key knowledge and skills.

Positive Behavior Management

Prevention through classroom management typically focuses on developing appropriate student behaviors, accelerating classroom learning, and decreasing inappropriate behaviors. Features of positive classroom management include:

- **Clearly communicated expectations for student behavior**. Teachers define acceptable behaviors in a concrete manner. Acceptable and desired behaviors are within reach for the students.
- **Ongoing positive and corrective feedback**. Teachers tell students what they are doing correctly and praise them for appropriate behavior. In addition, teachers redirect inappropriate behavior before more intensive interventions become necessary (Montague, Bergeron, & Lago-Delello, 1997).
- **Fair and consistent treatment of students**. Rules, consequences, and enforcement procedures are clearly defined and articulated to all students (Henderson, 1997). There are no surprises; students know what is expected and what will happen if they deviate from the established system. The posted rules and mild consequences are fair and applied consistently to all students.

An important element of positive behavior management is teaching students to monitor their own behaviors. Self-monitoring provides students with a strategy for observing their own behavior, recording it, and evaluating how they did. Typically, self-monitoring strategies consist of teacher cues, a student checklist of appropriate behaviors, and systematic reinforcement for progress. Self-monitoring helps students internalize their behavior and provides a visual reminder of what is expected of them.

Classroom Prevention in Action: Positive Behavior Management

At A Glance

Is this Prevention Strategy Right for My School?

Provides:	Positive behavior management system.
Features:	Instructional strategy for teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors; student self-monitoring.
Serves:	Students in elementary grades.
Requires:	Teacher training in techniques; reinforcers (e.g., tangibles, high-interest activities).
Enhancements:	Peer tutoring; social skills; parent involvement.

An increase in academic engagement, in seat behavior, and in positive student interaction — what administrator would not want a strategy that delivered these results? The **Behavior Prevention Program** works with educators to develop classroom management systems that focus on helping students develop these and other positive behaviors.

In the Behavior Prevention Program approach, teachers identify their expectations and teach the appropriate behaviors directly. Key instructional strategies include modeling, providing practice, rewarding good behavior, and having students self-monitor their progress. Teachers find that this approach increases their use of praise and reinforcement of proactive skills — a powerful strategy in teaching students how to behave.

The Good Student Game is an example of how teachers can focus on promoting positive behaviors using a class monitoring system (Babyak, Luze, & Kamps, in press). Teachers teach and

monitor positive behaviors (e.g., staying seated and working quietly) and students learn how to self-monitor these behaviors.

The steps to the Good Student Game are:

- Identify when to play the game.
- Identify and clearly define behaviors to be rewarded.
- Set goals for individual and group performance.
- Select rewards (e.g., pencils, notebooks, extra time at recess, etc.).
- Set the monitoring interval (e.g., variable or intermittent intervals when students will assess and record their own behavior).
- Teach the game procedures to students.
- Play the game.

Consider the following example. Mr. Perry, a fourth grade teacher, taught a diverse group of youngsters. In addition to typical students, there were students with attention problems, students with learning and behavioral difficulties, limited-English-proficiency students, and gifted students. Classroom management was a constant struggle.

Students had trouble following directions and completing assignments. Since many students had particular difficulty during independent work times, Mr. Perry decided to use the Good Student Game during those periods to keep students on-task. To support this goal, he identified the following behaviors:

- Stay seated.
- Raise your hand if you have a question.
- Work quietly.
- Raise your hand when you finish.

Next, Mr. Perry set performance goals and rewards. In order to receive 10 minutes of free time at the end of the day, all students were expected to demonstrate the appropriate behaviors 80% of the time. Because students routinely asked (and sometimes pleaded) for free time, Mr. Perry felt confident that students would value this reward.

Mr. Perry taught the Good Behavior Game procedures to students in a 20-minute session. To set the context, he began by having students discuss the relationship between good behavior and classroom success. He then presented the behaviors, modeled them, and gave students ample opportunities to practice them.

Finally, he showed students how their behavior would be monitored. By participating in the Good Behavior Game, students learned to self-monitor their behavior. Over time, students internalized the appropriate behaviors.

"The prevention programs have made a great impact on our students. The strong programs implemented have strengthened the social and academic performance of our students. Our students now display more of a positive disposition, and discipline problems have declined. Our student attendance has improved significantly as well. I feel the prevention approach helps improve the positive school climate which is critical in urban schools serving high rates of minority and low socioeconomic groups."

Willia Crawford,
Principal
Kansas

Social Skills Instruction

Teachers must be clear about their expectations regarding social skills. We may say we expect students to listen, to show respect, to cooperate, to be responsible, and to resolve conflicts. However, unless we make sure students understand what we mean and what they are supposed to do, we cannot expect compliance.

Social skills instruction includes classroom survival skills (e.g., listening, answering questions, asking for help) and critical peer skills (e.g., cooperating, showing empathy, making friends). Most elementary aged students can benefit from social skills instruction. But students with behavior problems often have social skill deficits that put them at a distinct disadvantage in classroom and schoolwide interactions.

Effective social skills instruction also can affect classroom management practices. For example, many classroom routines require that students demonstrate good social skills (e.g., listen, ask politely, cooperate, share materials). Teaching social skills can help to clarify teacher expectations and help students understand how they should behave.

Social skills instruction also can help improve social interactions and reduce problem behavior. An increasingly common view holds that some students who misbehave do so because they lack the social skills necessary for making more appropriate choices. In this context, social skills become "replacement behaviors" — we teach students how to behave appropriately so they will make the "right" choices. For instance, a child may respond in anger by hitting another child because he or she has not been taught acceptable alternatives.

There are literally hundreds of commercially available social skills programs (see Alberg, Petry, & Eller, 1992). Examples of social skills programs that support prevention include:

- ***Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child*** (McGinnis & Goldstein, 1997)
- ***Teaching Social Skills: A Practical Instructional Approach*** (Rutherford, Chipman, DiGangi, & Anderson, 1992).
- ***Skills for Living*** (Quest International, 1988).

Classroom Prevention in Action: Social Skills Instruction

Today's students bring to the classroom a diversity of background experiences and social learnings. Too often, students fail at tasks because they have not developed the social skills they need to succeed.

At A Glance

Is this Prevention Strategy Right for My School?

Provides:	Social skills instruction for classroom routines, rules, and transition procedures.
Features:	Classroom-based model for teaching social skills and self-monitoring to all students.
Serves:	Students in elementary grades.
Requires:	Teacher training in techniques.
Enhancements:	Academic support (e.g., instruction matched to students' needs, instructional strategies such as peer tutoring); positive behavioral management system that includes self-management.

Project SUCCESS recommends teaching social skills as part of the curriculum. The components of the Project SUCCESS approach are:

- Define the social skill to be taught in observable terms.
- Teach the social behaviors that make up the skill.
- Model the skill.
- Engage students in practicing the skill.
- Provide reinforcement and feedback for skill performance.
- Have students self-monitor their behaviors.

Although some teachers choose to teach social skills as a subject area in its own right, others integrate social skills instruction throughout the curriculum. Project SUCCESS links social skills instruction with activity or lesson requirements because most instructional formats — discussion, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, group problem solving, etc. — require social as well as academic skills. If students do not have the social prerequisites for participating in an activity (e.g., listening, following directions, ask-

ing questions, etc.), they may respond with off-task and other inappropriate behaviors.

Using the Project SUCCESS model, teachers teach the social skills that support participation in academic activities. For example, students may be expected to solve a math story problem in groups, discuss the characters in a story during literacy circle, or use a writing process to edit a partner's writing. Teachers teach the social skills concurrently with the academic content.

Project SUCCESS also recommends teaching social skills that are linked to classroom rules. Consider this example. Ms. Trujillo posted the following classroom rules:

- Listen to my teacher and follow her directions.
- Stay in my seat unless I have permission to leave.
- Stop talking when my teacher tells me.

Although Ms. Trujillo phrased the rules clearly and in a positive manner, she questioned whether the students had the necessary social skills to comply. For example, she had to ask the class repeatedly to listen while she was talking. At one point she became so frustrated with several students that she exclaimed, "Why don't you ever listen?" She was very surprised to find later that even though these youngsters had been chatting, they had been following her directions for completing their assignment.

Ms. Trujillo decided that some of her students probably did not know how to listen. As she thought more about her dilemma, she questioned whether or not she had made her expectations for social behavior clear to the students. To enhance their social skills, Ms. Trujillo decided to teach listening skills — specifically the subskill, "letting the listener know you are listening" — using the Project SUCCESS approach. As part of instruction, she had students self-monitor their progress (see sidebar) in every lesson and class activity.

"In order to ensure the academic success of our children, our school strives for a true partnership with the community so we can support the whole child as well as the family. We are able to consider and act on the social, emotional, physical, psychological, and academic needs of our children. We do whatever it takes."

Dr. Grace Nebb,
Principal
Florida

Self-Monitoring Card

Listening Manners	Math	Language Arts	Science	Social Studies
Eyes on the speaker.				
Hands still (in your lap).				
Feet on the ground.				
Ears ready to listen.				
Lips quiet.				
Focus on the speaker.				

Academic Enrichment

Students with learning difficulties sometimes exhibit behavioral problems. For example, the student who has difficulty staying on task during reading group may have an underlying reading problem that should be assessed. Remedial programs, such as those in reading, can play important roles in preventing behavior problems (Rankhorn, England, Collins, Lockavitch, & Algozzine, 1998).

Academic tutoring — and especially peer tutoring — is often cited as a viable prevention strategy. Peer tutoring can have a positive effect on student learning, is cost effective, and can be effective in improving both the tutor's and tutee's social development (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1992).

Several of the projects featured in this guide incorporated tutoring into their total prevention programs. Examples include:

- The Behavior Prevention Program found that classwide peer tutoring (Greenwood, Delquadri, & Carta, 1997) facilitated development of basic literacy skills and active student engagement in instruction.
- Project SUCCESS found that cross-age peer tutoring resulted in significantly improved reading scores for students who were at risk for behavioral problems.

Schoolwide Prevention

Teachers can use universal prevention strategies in their classrooms to achieve positive student outcomes. Results may be even better, however, when the entire school staff is committed to universal prevention and when there is a schoolwide learning environment that promotes positive academic, behavioral, and social-emotional outcomes for all students (CEC, 1997).

Positive behavior management, social skills instruction, and academic enrichment techniques form the basis for a schoolwide approach. Throughout the school day and across all school environments students should be encouraged to adapt their behavior to the school setting. Expectations for behavior, rules, and consequences should be consistent. Schoolwide prevention approaches support adaptive behavior; schoolwide structures enable all staff to identify signs of problems early and to take steps to resolve them.

In addition to programs that address special academic learning needs, common features of schoolwide prevention programs include:

- **Unified discipline approach.** Throughout the school there are clearly defined expectations and rules for appropriate behavior, with common consequences and clearly stated procedures for correcting problem behaviors.
- **Shared expectations for socially competent behavior.** Schoolwide support plans address social and behavioral needs by helping students learn to manage their own behavior. The emphasis is on teaching students how to solve conflicts, be responsible, and behave in socially appropriate ways as members of a learning community.

Examples of prevention strategies reflecting these features follow.

Schoolwide Prevention in Action: Unified Discipline Approach

At A Glance

Is this Prevention Strategy Right for My School?

Provides:	A schoolwide discipline plan.
Features:	Schoolwide discipline plan reflects unified attitudes, expectations, and consequences for misbehavior; staff roles are clearly defined.
Serves:	Students in grades K-6.
Requires:	Staff training in techniques; planning time; computer software; monitoring measures.
Enhancements:	Remedial reading support; Total Quality Education approach in classrooms; home-school collaboration.

A major focus of the **Improving the Lives of Children** project is the development of a four-prong schoolwide discipline plan. These four components are:

- **Unified attitudes.** Teachers and other school personnel share the belief that instruction can improve behavior and that helping students develop positive

behaviors is a legitimate part of teaching.

- **Unified expectations.** Teachers and school personnel agree on expectations and consistently encourage them.
- **Unified consequences.** When classroom and schoolwide rules are broken, teachers and school personnel respond in a consistent manner. Using a warm yet firm voice, they state the behavior, the violated rule, and the consequence.
- **Unified team roles.** All personnel have clearly described responsibilities.

"Any teacher will tell you that Unified Discipline has made a difference in our school. We are all very pleased with the reductions in office referrals and improvements in classroom behavior that we have observed. It's great to all be 'on the same page' with discipline."

Edward Ellis, Principal
North Carolina

When schools implement a unified discipline plan, they can expect the following outcomes:

- Improved student behavior, including time on task.
- Decreased discipline issues and office referrals.
- Improved staff and student attitudes.

Consider this example. As part of Windsor Park's yearly improvement plan, Principal Williams and her faculty identified high rates of office referrals, inconsistent approaches to classroom management, and low teacher morale related to discipline. Ms. Williams decided that a schoolwide discipline model was needed.

First, Ms. Williams presented the unified discipline approach to her staff and encouraged them to adopt it. After securing unanimous support for the approach, she engaged all personnel in identifying expectations and consequences to be implemented across all grade levels. This afforded staff opportunities to discuss concerns and arrive at consensus regarding expectations for appropriate behavior and how transgressions should be handled. From this point, a small group set about writing the plan, which was later circulated for review and discussion.

Once the plan was in final form, staff explained it to the students. A monitoring system was put into place to track office referrals and classroom discipline issues. After the first year of implementation, the results were impressive. Office referrals showed a significant decrease, as did classroom rule violations.

Schoolwide Prevention in Action: Shared Expectations for Socially Competent Behavior

At A Glance

Is this Prevention Strategy Right for My School?

Provides:	A conflict resolution approach.
Features:	Conflict resolution skills are taught to entire student population; a cadre of peer mediators are trained to intervene.
Serves:	Students in grades six through eight.
Requires:	Time for peer mediation sessions; training time for teachers and students; curriculum materials.
Enhancements:	Peer mediation time built into regular school schedule; advertising the availability of peer mediators.

Handling conflicts is a significant challenge for early adolescents. Students of all ages typically rely on withdrawal or use of aggression. They can benefit from training in how to handle conflicts in socially appropriate ways (AASA, 1995).

Stemming conflict through peer mediation and conflict resolution is the goal of the **Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation Project.** To reduce the incidence of peer conflict, all students re-

ceive social skills training in conflict resolution, with selected students learning mediation skills. These "peer mediators" have the opportunity to demonstrate prosocial skills for resolving disputes on a regular basis.

The results can be impressive. After training in conflict resolution and peer mediation:

- Students tend to resolve conflicts through discussion and negotiation procedures.
- Students' attitudes toward conflict and the school climate tend to be more positive.
- Students' psychological health and self-esteem tend to improve.
- Discipline problems and suspensions tend to decrease.

The Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation Project helps students develop interpersonal skills that lead to prosocial behavior and constructive conflict management. The project approach consists of the following components:

- **A schoolwide conflict resolution curriculum.** The purpose of the curriculum is to provide a constructive approach to conflict and to provide students with skills that can help them find productive resolutions. Social skills for conflict resolution include: understanding conflict, communicating effectively, understanding and handling anger, and mediating peer disagreements.
- **A peer mediation program.** Each school selects a group of 20-35 students who receive special training in mediation skills. Social mediation skills include: understanding conflict, maintaining confidentiality, communicating effectively, and listening. The students who complete the training successfully serve as schoolwide peer mediators for the year.
- **Schoolwide structure for conflict mediation.** When students cannot resolve their own conflicts, they may refer themselves or be referred to peer mediation sessions. Peer mediation sessions are scheduled as part of the formal school schedule. Referrals to peer mediation can be made by students, teachers, or administrative staff. Pairs of mediators use structured mediation procedures to help disputants come to mutually satisfactory agreements.

Let's follow the peer mediation process in a southeastern middle school. To formalize the referral process, school staff members developed a referral protocol and schedule for mediations. Staff members knew that it was important to accommodate disputants in a timely manner with minimal disruption of academic activities, so they set aside homeroom period for peer mediation sessions. Homeroom offered an environment in which routine supervision could be kept to a minimum, but also ensured that a teacher or counselor would be available if needed.

To initiate the protocol for a mediation, students or staff used a referral form that included the following information:

- Referring party.
- Conflict location.
- Brief description of the problem.
- Names of the disputants.

Once a referral was made, a mediation was scheduled. Two peer mediators met with the students to help them resolve their conflict constructively and to prevent the problem from escalating. At the end of each mediation, the peer mediators completed a peer mediation agreement form that was signed by the media-

"We have used a combination peer mediation and conflict resolution program for the past three years in our urban school of 1150 students from varied socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. We have found it very useful in allowing students to develop the skills needed to solve their own problems without adult help. In middle school, many students will listen to peers and are more willing to take care of conflicts when they can share with other students rather than adults."

Terry Moore, Dean
Florida

tors and the disputants. This form included the mediation date, type of conflict, and agreed-upon resolution.

Prevention Through School-Family-Community Linkages

Prevention in school is only one part — albeit a critical one — of a comprehensive preventive strategy. Children's problems are often a reaction to negative stressors in their daily lives (e.g., poverty, inadequate health care and/or nutrition, physical and/or emotional abuse, homelessness, etc.). These persistent, often severe and enduring stressors are the backdrop from which serious emotional and behavioral difficulties can arise, distracting children from their schoolwork and impeding their ability to learn. Because classroom and schoolwide supports are usually not enough, schools also need to serve as a pathway to family and community service partnerships. Increasingly, schools are addressing prevention through the following approaches:

- Developing partnerships with parents.
- Building linkages with community agency services.

Parent Partnerships

Programs to help students at risk for developing emotional and behavioral problems are most successful when solutions involve the home (Cheney, 1998; Watson & Rangel, 1998). The term "parent" or "parents" is used to mean the person or persons who are responsible for the daily care of the child (including biological parents, adoptive parents, grandparents, and guardians).

Students benefit from messages that are consistent between home and school. Parents and educators work together to build student behavioral skills and competencies. They work to stop aggression before additional problems develop. Students with more serious behavior problems benefit from the consistent use of reinforcement and mild consequences across home and school settings.

Prevention in Action: Parent Partnerships

At A Glance

Is this Prevention Strategy Right for My School?

Provides:	Family-teacher planning around student emotional and behavioral issues.
Features:	Action research teams of teachers and parents facilitated by a Parent Liaison.
Serves:	Students who show signs of emotional and/or behavioral problems in kindergarten through second grade.
Requires:	Time for teachers to meet with families; access to trained parent liaisons.
Enhancements:	Classroom instruction in social skills.; parent liaison to support families.

How can schools involve families in meaningful ways? The **Achieving Behaving Caring Project** found that when parents join teachers as equals in doing action research, they develop new relationships that can ultimately strengthen their involvement in their child's education.

Action research involves the systematic investigation of a specific problem by those most closely concerned with it. In education, action research is usually carried out by teachers, either singly or in collegial groups. Parent-teacher action research combines the benefits of par-

ent-teacher teaming (derived from special education practices) with the systematic and democratic structure of action research. With the support of Parent Liaisons, parents can participate as equal partners in their child's education.

The parents and teachers of a child who has emotional and/or behavioral issues begin their work by describing the child's strengths and identifying what is puzzling to them about the child's behavior. They ask, "What do we need to know to help this child learn and grow?" This discussion forms the basis for the action research process, which involves the following steps:

- Choose the research question.
- Collect the data. If the questions posed ask "how often" or "how many," then the research methods should relate to numbers and statistics. If the questions are more qualitative (e.g., "What do people think?" "What is happening?") then information is usually gathered from interviews, observations, etc. Teams often collect both types of data.
- Reflect on the data and share thoughts with one another.
- Analyze the data, making sure that both parents and teachers participate.
- Formulate a practical theory.
- Use the practical theory to guide a new plan of action. Brainstorm ideas and choose those upon which there is mutual agreement.
- Plan a course of action and implement it.

Parents and teachers set mutual goals for the child's progress during the school year. Setting mutual goals and carrying out joint action plans ensures greater consistency between home and school. Observation and reflection yield new knowledge that can help teachers and parents improve their practices.

Consider the example of Tom, a first grader. The second meeting between Tom's mother, Kimberly, and his teacher, Susan, began with the sharing of observations:

- Susan was concerned that Tom has difficulty sharing materials. She wondered if she should give him his own box of crayons. Kimberly didn't think this was a good idea, because she wants Tom to be treated like the other students.
- Susan was concerned that Tom repeats questions over and over when he wants something. Tom demonstrated this behavior when he wanted Susan to tie his shoes. Kimberly said he does the same thing at home.

After encouragement from her Parent Liaison, Kimberly mentioned something that was of great concern to her — Tom's head banging. Tom bangs his head when he gets angry or doesn't get his way. He began this behavior at one year of age, and he no longer cries when he bangs his head. Susan noted that Tom has banged his head with his fist in class.

Susan and Kimberly agreed that Tom often gets his own way through persistence and repetition. They devised a practical theory to explain their observations: Tom has developed a set of inappropriate behaviors that get him what he wants.

Of all the behaviors Kimberly and Susan discussed, they decided that learning to tie his shoes is an important, yet reachable, goal for Tom. Susan agreed to teach both Kimberly and Tom her "rabbit ears" trick for tying shoes. If Tom is successful, then he might start to develop the

"Rural families with low incomes have many of the same problems as urban families have, compounded by distance, lack of public transportation and access to telephones. Parents who were not successful themselves in school find it really difficult to walk through the same school doors and work as equals with teachers whom they had as children, especially when their children have some of the same emotional and behavioral problems. With the help of the Parent Liaisons, the Parent-Teacher Action Research approach enabled teachers to build real working partnerships with families."

Lisa Delorme, Principal
Northern New England

self-confidence to do other things without help. They also selected a social skill for him to work on: asking for help in an appropriate way. Their plan of action included teaching the social skill to the entire class. They decided to monitor Tom's progress at home and at school. The Parent Liaison promised to call Kimberly in a week to see how things were progressing at home.

School-Community Agency Linkages

A child's academic success can be compromised by health and social problems. Although schools have provided basic health care services since the early part of this century, the provision of comprehensive mental health and other social services in schools is a recent development (Flaherty, Weist, & Warner, 1996). Because these noneducational services often are vital to a child's educational progress, such services — particularly health and social services — increasingly are being based in schools (Morrill, 1992).

It is important to link the various services provided by human service agencies with the schools. Many families have needs, but they may not be aware of the resources that are available to them in the community. This is particularly true for recent immigrants. Other families may be aware of available resources but may encounter significant barriers (e.g., lack of transportation or child care, intimidation, fear, or negative experiences with the social service system) that prevent them from accessing the services.

Prevention In Action: School as a Pathway to Community Services

The **Linkages to Learning Program** is a collaborative, school-based program that provides an array of health and human services to children and families in an accessible and familiar setting. The goal of the program is to address social, emotional, economic, and health problems that interfere with a child's ability to succeed in school.

At A Glance

Is this Prevention Strategy Right for My School?

Provides:	School-based health and social services access and referral.
Features:	Students and families receive mental health services, social service assistance, health care, and educational support.
Serves:	Students in grades one through five and their families.
Requires:	Full and part-time staff to coordinate and provide medical, mental health, counseling, and other services; agreements with service providers.
Enhancements:	Afterschool and extended program; bilingual staff.

Linkages to Learning is located on the grounds of an elementary school and is available to all children and families at the school. The program is staffed by a multidisciplinary team that works with school staff and community providers. Funding is managed through a consortium of local, state, federal, and foundation sources.

There are four key components to the Linkages to Learning program:

- **Social service assistance for families.** Case managers work with families to help them learn about and access resources in a variety of areas, including housing, food/clothing, financial assistance, employment, legal/immigration concerns, and medical/dental needs.
- **Mental health assessment and treatment for children and families.** Services for children include comprehensive mental health assessments, individual and family

therapy, classroom-based social skill groups, and afterschool groups. Psychological and medical evaluations also are available. Services for families include counseling, support groups, and workshops on child-related topics.

- **Educational support**. Services for children include evening tutoring programs and recreational activities. Adult education classes are offered for parents. Once a month, parents, children, and teachers participate in a Family Learning Night, which focuses on building partnerships between home and school. Workshops on topics related to prevention/management of behavioral and emotional problems are offered to teachers.
- **Health and wellness services for students**. Services are available to children who demonstrate financial need. These include primary health care, immunizations, and physical exams; diagnosis and treatment of acute illnesses and minor injuries; management of chronic illnesses; hearing and vision testing; some prescriptions, medication, and laboratory testing; dental education, screening, and referral; and health and nutrition education.

Consider this example. The student population had very diverse needs in one elementary school that houses the Linkages to Learning program. The student population represented diverse racial and cultural backgrounds: 53% Hispanic, 27% African American, 19% Asian, and 1% Caucasian. Twenty-eight per cent of the students qualified for English as a Second Language programs, and 93% qualified for free or reduced meals. Title I served approximately 61% of the student body. The following vignette illustrates how the program served families and children:

> Carmen immigrated to the U.S. almost 12 years ago from El Salvador. She and her husband have six children. Four of their children were born in this country. The oldest two children, who were born in El Salvador, joined the family about four years ago. For two years, Carmen and her family received numerous services from the Linkages to Learning program, including: assistance in completing citizenship applications; access to Medicaid; English language classes; referrals for mental health services. Carmen attended a parent support group to understand child development and behavior and her husband attended an alcohol abuse group. The youngest three children participated in afterschool groups for students with aggressive behaviors.

At this site, the Linkages to Learning staff included: project director; case manager, two mental health therapists (part-time), community service aide (part time), school community health nurse, and health room technician. Other service providers within the school (e.g., school guidance counselor, mental health therapist, parent outreach coordinator, resource staff, etc.) also collaborated with the Linkages to Learning program staff to provide coordinated care to children and families. The program received funding from local, state, and foundation sources.

The program received guidance from a community advisory board made up of school representatives, parents, local business people, neighborhood residents, and other community members. The board met on a quarterly basis to ensure that the program remained responsive to the changing needs of the community and to help program staff identify community resources and develop collaborative projects with other local service providers.

> *"It's been amazing. Now, with these services here, on site, ready for parents and ready for children to avail themselves of, the school staff can focus on what they're here for, and that's instruction. And because of that, we've seen continuous progress. Children are reading better, our mobility rate has gone down, our attendance has increased, and children and their parents just generally seem happier. Parent involvement in the school has also increased dramatically ... and I think it's because of the program."*
>
> Mary D'Ovidio
> Principal
> Maryland

Next Steps

Administrators always have been charged with creating a school environment that promotes academic achievement for all students. As increasing numbers of students come to school with behaviors and emotional issues that can disrupt their learning, and, at times, the learning of others, that challenge grows.

The approaches described in this guide were developed to assist administrators in maintaining a school environment that is supportive and respectful of the needs of all students, while at the same time providing a way to prevent inappropriate behaviors from escalating into more serious problems.

Prevention practices — whether they are classroom-based, schoolwide, or involve developing linkages with parents and community services — require administrative support and resources for implementation. The next step toward implementing these approaches is to learn more about their results, their possible fit with your school, their costs, and their flexibility. The next section provides a description of the different projects and contact information for each one.

Find Out More About the Projects

All projects cited in this guide received funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). They represent a comprehensive approach to prevention. (See **Prevention Features of Projects At-a-Glance**, page 17.) Our web site at **http://www.air.org/cecp/preventionstrategies** provides more information about each project, including details of the intervention, its effectiveness, and the resources needed to implement it. Also visit this site to download another copy of this guide or to contact project personnel directly.

Achieving Behaving Caring (ABC) Project

Pam Kay
School Research Office
Department of Education
429 Waterman Building
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT 05405-0160
(802)656-8551
email: **pkay@zoo.uvm.edu**

Martha Fitzgerald and Pam Kay direct the Achieving Behaving Caring Project (grant number: H237F50036). There are three major components of the ABC Project:

- Parent-teacher action research as the model for developing consonance between home and school.
- Parent Liaisons from the local community coordinate and facilitate regular communication between parents and teachers.
- Social skills instruction. Lessons from a social skills curriculum chosen by classroom teachers are taught twice a week throughout the year to all children in the first and second grades.

Staff members provide training and technical assistance. Several reports are available:

Kay, P.J. (1997). Parents + teachers + action research = real involvement. ***TEACHING Exceptional Children, 30***, 8-11.

Kay, P.J., & Benway, C. (1998, April). The essential role of parents as members of the research team in early intervention for children with emotional and behavioral issues. Paper presented at ***Building On***

Prevention Features

Projects At-a-Glance

	Achieving Behaving Caring Project	Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation Project	Improving the Lives of Children	Linkages to Learning Program	Behavior Prevention Program	Project SUCCESS
Prevention in the Classroom						
Positive behavior management	✓				✓	✓
Social skills instruction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academic enrichment			✓		✓	✓
Schoolwide Prevention						
Unified discipline approach		✓	✓			
Shared expectations for socially competent behavior		✓			✓	
Academic enrichment				✓	✓	
School-Family-Community Linkages						
Parent partnerships	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Community services				✓		✓

Family Strengths, the annual conference of the Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health, Portland, OR.

McConaughy, S.H., Kay, P.J., & Fitzgerald, M. (1998). Preventing SED through parent-teacher action research and social skills instruction: First-year outcomes. ***Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 6,*** 81-93.

Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation Project

Ann Daunic
Department of Special Education
1313A Norman Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-7050
(352)392-0701
email: **adaunic@coe.ufl.edu**

Ann Daunic, Stephen Smith, and M. David Miller direct the Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation Project (grant number: H237F50028). The project works with schools to train staff members and students in conflict resolution and peer mediation. The following article is available from the project:

Daunic, A.P., Smith, S.W., Robinson, T.R., Miller, M.D., & Landry, K.L. (1998). School-wide conflict resolution: Middle school responses to a peer mediation program.

For more information on conflict resolution, consult the web site of the National Institute for Dispute Resolution, Conflict Resolution Education Network: **www.crenet.org**.

Improving the Lives of Children

Bob Algozzine
Department of Teaching Specialities
University of North Carolina-Charlotte
Charlotte, NC 28223
(704)547-2531
email: **rfalgozz@email.uncc.edu**

The Improving the Lives of Children project (grant number: H237F40012) has implemented and assessed a set of schoolwide prevention approaches:

- Unified discipline plan. The focus of the effort is the development and use of unified attitudes, expectations, correction procedures, and team roles on a schoolwide basis to improve discipline.
- Failure free reading program. Because reading problems are a prevalent concern for students with learning disabilities, a remedial approach — the failure free reading program — is made available. Computer-based and print materials are used to improve attitudes and classroom behavior, as well as achievement in word recognition and comprehension.
- Total Quality Education. This approach builds each student's sense of personal responsibility for his or her own learning and behavior. The students in each class establish a mission and vision that emphasizes taking responsibility for their actions. Students identify criteria for measuring their learning progress toward their mission. In addition to using total quality tools to think, plan, and work together, students monitor their progress by using charts and graphs.

Staff members are available to provide training and implementation support. Several articles are available from the project:

Algozzine, B., & Lockavitch, J.F. (1998). Effects of failure-free reading program on students at-risk for reading failure. ***Special Services in the Schools, 13,*** 95-105.

Audette, B., & Algozzine, B. (1997). Re-inventing government? Let's reinvent special education. ***Journal of Learning Disabilities, 30,*** 378-383.

Lockavitch, J., & Algozzine, B. (1998). Effects of intensive intervention on students at-risk for reading failure. ***Florida Reading Journal, 35***(2), 27-31.

Linkages to Learning Program

Jennifer Oppenheim
Department of Human Development
3304 Benjamin Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
(301)405-0483
email: **jo47@umail.umd.edu**

Jennifer Oppenheim, Nathan Fox, Peter Leone, and Ken Rubin direct Linkages to Learning (grant number: H237F50014). Staff members are available as consultants to schools interested in establishing a Linkages to Learning program.

Behavior Prevention Program

Debra Kamps
Juniper Gardens Children Project
650 Minnesota Avenue, 2nd Floor
University of Kansas-Kansas City
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
(913)321-3143
email: **kamps@kuhub.cc.ukans.edu**

The **Behavior Prevention Program** (grant number: H237F50019) trains parents and teachers to provide multiple setting (home and school) and multimodal (behavior management, social skills, and academic tutoring) prevention strategies. Several articles are available from the project:

Kamps, D., Ellis, C., Mancina, C., & Greene, L. (1995). Peer-inclusive social skills groups for young children with behavioral risks ***Preventing School Failure, 39,*** 10-15.

Kamps, D., Kravits, T., Rausch, J., & Kamps, J. (Unpublished manuscript). The effects of prevention and the moderating effects of variation in strength of treatment and classroom structure on the related behaviors of SED and high-risk students.

Kamps, D., Kravits, T., Stolze, J., & Swaggart, B. (In press). Prevention strategies for at-risk and students identified with emotional and behavioral disorders in urban elementary school settings. ***Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.***

Kamps, D., & Tankersley, M. (1996). Prevention of behavioral and conduct disorders: Trends and research issues. ***Behavioral Disorders, 22,*** 41-48.

Project SUCCESS

Marjorie Montague
University of Miami
P.O. BOX 248065
Coral Gables, FL 33124
(305)284-2891
email: **mmontague@miami.edu**

Marjorie Montague, James McKinney, and Anne Hocutt direct Project SUCCESS (grant number: H237F40022). Project SUCCESS staff work directly with classroom teachers to provide support in the classroom (grades 1-4). Project SUCCESS is a comprehensive approach that considers the following areas as entry points for prevention:

- Cross-age peer tutoring for improving reading skills.
- Direct assistance to classroom teachers on behavioral management techniques.
- Training on teaching social skills.

Project SUCCESS also works with schools to establish full service schools. One article is available from the project:

McKinney, J.D., Montague, M., & Hocutt, A.M. (1998). Systematic screening of children at risk for developing SED: Initial results from a prevention project. In C. Liberton, K. Kutash, & R. Friedman (Eds.), ***The 10th Annual Research Conference Proceedings, A System of Care for Children's Mental Health: Expanding the Knowledge Base*** (pp. 271-276). Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, The Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

References

Alberg, J., Petry, C., & Eller, S. (1992). ***Social skills planning guide.*** Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Algozzine, B., & Ysseldyke, J. (1992). ***Strategies and tactics for effective instruction.*** Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

American Association of School Administrators (1995). ***Conflict resolution.*** Alexandria, VA: Author.

Babyak, A., Luze, G., & Kamps, D. (In press). The good student game: Behavior management for the diverse classroom. ***Intervention in School and Clinic.***

Council for Exceptional Children (Fall 1997). Schoolwide behavioral management systems. ***Research Connections in Special Education, 1***(1), 1-8.

Cheney, D. (1998). Using action research as a collaborative process to enhance educators' and families' knowledge and skills for youth with emotional or behavioral disorders. ***Preventing School Failure, 42***, 88-93.

Dodge, D.T., & Bickert, T.S. (1996).Creating structure in the elementary classroom. ***Principal, 76***, 34-36.

Flaherty, L.T., Weist, M.D., & Warner, B.S. (1996). School-based mental health service in the United States: History, current models and needs. ***Community Mental Health Journal, 32***, 341-352.

Greenwood, C., Delquadri, J., & Carta, J. (1997). ***Together we can! Classwide peer tutoring to improve basic academic skills.*** Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Henderson, N. (1997). Resiliency in schools: Making it happen. ***Principal, 77***, 10-17.

Henley, M. (1997). Why punishment doesn't work. ***Principal, 77***, 45-46.

Langdon, C.A. (1997). The fourth Phi Delta Kappa Poll of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Public Schools. ***Phi Delta Kappan, 79***, 212-220.

McGinnis, E., & Goldstein, A. (1997). ***Skillstreaming the elementary child.*** Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Montague, M., Bergeron, J., & Lago-Delello, E. (1997). Using prevention strategies in general education. ***Focus on Exceptional Children, 8***(29), 1-12.

Morrill, W.A. (1992). Overview of service delivery to children. ***The Future of Children, 2***(1), 32-43.

Quest International (1988). ***Skills for living.*** Granville, OH: Author.

Rankhorn, B., England, G., Collins, S.M., Lockavitch, J.F., & Algozzine, B. (1998). Effects of the failure free reading program on students with severe reading disabilities. ***Journal of Learning Disabilities, 31***, 307-312.

Rutherford, R., Chipman, J., DiGangi, S., & Anderson, C. (1992). ***Teaching social skills: A practical instructional approach.*** Reston, VA: Exceptional Innovations.

Watson, D., & Rangel L. (1996). So Johnny's been bad. What else is new? ***Principal, 75***, 27-28.

Wehby, J.H., Dodge, K.A., Valente, E., & The Conduct Disorders Research Group (1993). School behavior of first grade children identified as at-risk for development of conduct problems. ***Behavioral Disorders, 19***, 67-78.

Acknowledgments

Production of this publication was supported in part by Grant H237F0036 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services/Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Points of view or opinions stated in this publication do not necessarily represent official agency positions.

Collaborative Dissemination for the Prevention Projects
Pam Kay, Coordinator
School Research Office
Department of Education
429 Waterman Building
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT 05405

OSEP Project Officer
Helen Thornton

Collaborative Design Team
Mike Benz, University of Oregon
Ann Daunic, University of Florida
Marjorie Montague, University of Miami
David Osher, American Institutes for Research
Jacqueline Rhuman, University of Hawaii
Mary Sinclair, University of Minnesota
Julie Welkowitz, University of Vermont

Administrator Advisory Group
Lisa Delorme, Vermont
Edward Ellis, North Carolina
Grace Nebb, Florida
Kathy Richardson, Florida
Karen Robinson, Maryland

Special Assistance
Amy Ryan & Cyndi Snyder, University of Vermont

Written and Produced
Worger, Eavy & Associates
P.O. Box 3836
Reston, VA 20195

No endorsement by those named should be assumed.

Copyright (c) 1999 by the University of Vermont.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE